

NEWSLETTER

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF THE MILITARY



HOMECOMING CEREMONY HELD FOR RAPID CITY GUARD UNIT

About 90 soldiers with the South Dakota Army National Guard's Company C, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment were honored during a homecoming ceremony at the Rushmore Plaza Civic Center in Rapid City this past weekend. These soldiers had returned to South Dakota in September after serving nearly a year throughout the Middle East.

While deployed, the unit provided 24/7 combat life-saving aerial medical evacuation support with HH-60M Black Hawk helicopters to U.S. military and coalition forces in Iraq and Syria.

State and local government leaders addressed the soldiers and their family members during the ceremony.

"To the members of the 1-189th, it's great to have you back!" said Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, SDNG Adjutant General. "The mission that you performed was critical to this nation's strategic objectives in the Middle East, and by all accounts, you performed all aspects of this mission in an outstanding manner. I couldn't be more proud of you than I am today and to have you home safe and sound."

The unit completed over 500 flying missions from six locations and evacuated over 700 patients while providing enroute medical care to higher-level medical facilities. The soldiers also worked with over 20 coalition nations to develop medical capacity and training while deployed.



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WORLD WAR ONE CENTENNIAL COMMEMORATION DAY

At the request of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of the Military, Gov. Dennis Daugaard has proclaimed Sunday, Nov. 11, 2018, as "World War One Centennial Commemoration Day." He asks that all South Dakotans participate as fully as possible in the spirit of this day, remembering all of our veterans who have served this great country, and especially those who served our country a century ago during World War I," said Governor Daugaard.

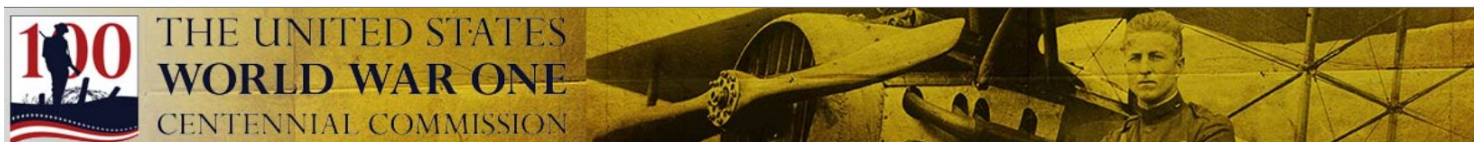
Over 32,000 South Dakota Soldiers served the United States during World War I, including over 1,500 South Dakota National Guard Soldiers who participated in a number of battles.

"World War One Veterans have all passed since their service," said Larry Zimmerman, Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs. "We stand in awe of their service to our country and the world. From the farms, cities, and reservations they stood up and fought for our freedoms."

World War One was one of the deadliest conflicts in world history. Over nine million combatants and seven million civilians died as a result of the war. The United States officially entered the war on April 6, 1917. Some 4.7 million Americans stepped forward to serve during the war, two million of them were deployed overseas to fight, and 116,516 of them never made it home.

"There was a total mobilization of the South Dakota National Guard during World War One and twenty-five of our soldiers lost their lives during that war," said Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, the adjutant general of the South Dakota National Guard. "Their families' lives were impacted in a profound manner as a result of those losses, and we are forever in their debt."

The United States World War One Centennial Commission was established by Congress in 2013 to provide education programs, public outreach, and commemorative events regarding the American involvement in the war. The Centennial Commission was also authorized by Congress to make a national-level memorial in the nation's capital, to honor the men and women who served. Information on the new National World War One Memorial can be found at www.ww1cc.org/memorial.



NATIONAL COMMANDER VISITS STATE VETERANS HOME



Pictured (l to r) MJFSVH Superintendent Brad Richardson, National Commander Brett Reistad, SDDVA Secretary Larry Zimmerman and State Commander Dennis Brenden

American Legion National Commander Brett Reistad is traveling the State of South Dakota this week and visiting with hundreds of veterans. Travise Flisrand, adjutant for the State American Legion and Dennis Brenden, State American Legion Commander are traveling the state with Brett.

Tuesday Commander Reistad visited the Sioux Falls SDDVA Claims Office and visited with staff. Thursday he had breakfast with veterans at the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home.

Reistad also visited VA Healthcare centers in Sioux Falls and Fort Meade as well as numerous posts throughout the state.

Secretary Zimmerman briefed Commander Reistad on the State Veterans Home and the proposed State Veterans Cemetery.

STATE VETERANS HOME ACHIEVES LEED CERTIFICATION

Ron Mielke from TSP Design team presented SDDVA with plaques this week recognizing the Department for achieving Silver Leed Certification for the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home.

LEED certification identifies the Home as a showcase example of sustainability and demonstrates our leadership in transforming the building industry.



SDDVA WISHES GOODSPEED THE BEST IN HIS NEW ENDEAVORS

Next week, South Dakota will be saying good-bye to an exceptional leader, Darwin Goodspeed. Goodspeed leaves Sioux Falls to become the Director of the Portland VA Health Care System.

South Dakota was founded with hard work, perseverance, dedication to duty, and concern for others, and each of these attributes can be ascribed to Darwin. His support of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs staff and our mission has been unending and very much valued.

"Darwin Goodspeed has brought the Sioux Falls VA to the rating of care that will be hard to beat," said Larry Zimmerman, Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs. "His caring for all veterans is unbelievable. The state of South Dakota is losing a great leader to Oregon. His daily operations is caring for his staff and veterans."

In 2012 Goodspeed began his journey in South Dakota as the Director of the Sioux Falls VA Health Care System. Prior to that he served as Associate Director of the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center and as Acting Director of the Chalmers P. Wylie Ambulatory Care Center, Columbus, Ohio.

"The relationship that exists between our Department and the Sioux Falls VA Medical Center under Director Goodspeed's leadership is as strong as it's ever been," said Deputy Secretary Aaron Pollard. "Working together the veterans served by this facility receive the respect and high level of care they have earned. Director Goodspeed will be missed, and he will always be considered a friend to veterans and the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs."

SDDVA encourages all to attend the farewell reception for Darwin on Friday, November 16, at 8:30 am in the Education Center in Building 1.



Perhaps Ralph Waldo Emerson said it best when he said "Enthusiasm is one of the most powerful engines of success. When you do a thing, do it with all your mind. Put your whole soul to it. Stamp it with your own personality. Be active, be energetic, be enthusiastic and faithful, and you will accomplish your object. Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm."

Thank you Darwin for sharing your enthusiasm with South Dakota and all our veterans. You will be missed!

SDNG RECOGNIZED FOR EXCELLENCE IN DIVERSITY

The South Dakota Army National Guard won a National Guard Bureau Excellence in Diversity Award for fiscal year 2017 presented at the National Guard Diversity Training Workshop at the Professional Education Center at Camp Robinson, Oct. 24.

The NGB Excellence in Diversity Awards are presented to outstanding National Guard individuals, organizations, states and territories for significant contributions to diversity and inclusion initiatives.

For the second year in a row, the SDARNG received the award in the Army National Guard organization/unit category, which recognizes significant contributions to readiness with regard to participation, leadership, new initiatives, and exemplifies diversity of thought and inclusion of non-traditional leaders of all ranks.

"Enhancing diversity and inclusion has been one of my top priorities since being appointed to this position in 2011," said Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, SDNG adjutant general. "The closer that our units represent the overall demographics of the State of South Dakota, the better we will be."

The SDARNG and its Army Diversity Council have led the state in diversity initiatives, along with other community-based organizations, and promoted broader diversity and cultural understanding. These initiatives have served to embed diversity in

strategic initiatives, as well as within its force development and recruiting and retention marketing approaches, and showcase various internal and external diversity programs linking directly to unit combat readiness.

Several of these initiatives included: working with community partners to host cultural awareness events; increasing efforts to recruit and retain women and minorities; promoting a culture where all service members can achieve the highest levels of leadership; building allied nation partnerships during training exercises and events; and to develop, mentor and retain top talent reflective of the communities the National Guard serves.

A SDARNG highlight event included the hosting of a Native American cultural awareness day during its annual Golden Coyote training exercise. The event featured a wacipi with ceremonial dancing and music, traditional food and artifacts, and informational booths, exhibits and craft classes. The event exposed more than 1,000 service members that participated in the exercise to Native American culture, customs and heritage.



VA MOBILIZES FEDERAL AGENCIES TO OFFER FREE LEGAL SERVICES TO HELP VETERANS

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) together with representatives from the departments of Labor, Justice, Defense, Homeland Security, the U.S. Navy and others, signed a joint statement aimed at improving access to free legal services for veterans in need.

Federal agencies and the Veterans legal services community came together at the VA headquarters in Washington D.C. to celebrate [VA's Medical Legal Partnerships](#) and to recognize volunteers who serve at VA-based free legal clinics.

Currently, the VA hosts at least 170 free legal clinics in its VA Medical Centers, Community Based Outpatient Clinics and Vet Centers across the country, by partnering with external legal service providers, such as local bar associations, legal aid organizations and law school clinics.



“Legal assistance stands high on the list of many veterans’ important but unmet needs,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “Our goal is to make sure our veterans have access to not only health care and disability benefits, but to community legal services that are central to their overall well-being.”

Veterans often face stressful legal situations — such as eviction, foreclosure, child support or driver’s license revocations — that can affect their ability to gain or maintain employment and housing, or focus on medical treatment. At the VA-hosted event this week, the VA and other federal agencies committed to encourage and further the provision of volunteer legal services to veterans.

As a prime example of the VA-based legal clinics nationwide, attorneys and paralegals from the VA and 13 other federal agencies have provided pro bono legal assistance on their own time to veterans at the Washington, D.C., VA Medical Center’s legal clinic, run by the [Veterans Pro Bono Consortium](#). During the past year, the legal clinic at that facility has served more than 800 veterans.

For more information about the VA’s coordination of legal services for veterans at VA facilities visit <https://www.va.gov/OGC/LegalServices.asp>.

COMMUNITY CARE NETWORK

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is committed to providing eligible veterans with the care they need when and where they need it. Many programs exist today for veterans to receive such care however, the multiple programs and eligibility requirements are confusing for veterans, community providers and VA staff.

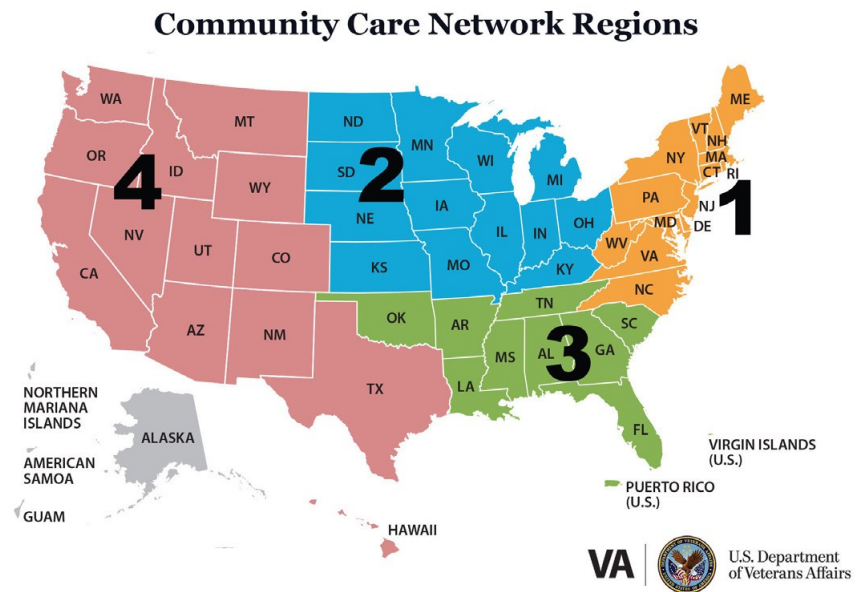
In an effort to streamline the VA's community care programs, the president signed the VA MISSION Act into legislation on Wednesday, June 6, 2018, providing more choices and robust care coordination for veterans using one consolidated program instead of multiple programs. A significant component of having one method for veterans to receive care from community providers, although not dependent on the legislation, are the Community Care Network (CCN) contracts to be awarded to as many as four contractors covering an established set of regional boundaries to ensure health care services and resources are available to our diverse veteran population.

To establish the new CCN, the VA released a Request for Proposal (RFP) for Third Party Administrators (TPAs) to develop and administer regional networks of high-performing licensed health care providers who will work together with VA providers and practitioners to provide medical, dental and pharmacy services to eligible Veterans who are unable to receive care at local VA medical centers. The CCN contracts were developed with a focus on transparency, accountability, quality and increased communications between VA and veterans.

This set of contracts, awarded to as many as four contractors covering an established set of regional boundaries aligned to state boundaries, will provide local flexibility and increased access to care.

Each regional network will serve as the contract vehicle for the VA to purchase care in the community. The existing Patient Centered Community Care (PC3) and the Veterans Choice Program (VCP) community care networks will transition out over a designated period of time to allow for the CCN implementation to occur region-by-region in a phased approach. This will ensure the veterans experience and coordination of care is consistent and without interruption.

The four regions were established based on the volume of veterans enrolled in the VA's health care systems and the number of community care referrals by state. Due to special nuances with health care systems and provider networks in Alaska, American Samoa, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands, those locations will be managed under separate contracts outside of the CCN.



COMMUNITY CARE NETWORK

(CONTINUED)

The CCN has several features that will improve care coordination and make it easier for community providers, VA staff, and TPAs to deliver care to veterans.

- **Expanded Health Care Services:** The CCN will administer regional networks of high-performing licensed health care providers who will work together with VA physicians and practitioners to provide medical, surgical, Complementary and Integrative Health Services (CIHS), Durable Medical Equipment (DME), pharmacy, and dental services to eligible veterans who are unable to receive care at local VA medical centers.
- **Improved Customer Service:** The CCN will allow VA staff to directly manage veteran touchpoints for customer service while the TPAs will support VA staff and community provider inquiries.
- **Improved Accountability:** Performance will be measured at the local VAMC level to help ensure TPAs build provider networks that meet the needs of veterans and VAMCs. The CCN will also enable the designation of high performing preferred providers by identifying providers that meet specific quality and performance metrics.
- **Improved Health Information Exchange:** The CCN will have direct health information sharing capability between VA and community providers to ensure proper care coordination.
- **Improved Referrals and Scheduling:** Under the new CCN, VA staff will refer Veterans directly to community providers and will directly schedule community care appointments for Veterans through the local VAMC. Veterans can also choose to schedule their own appointment with support from local VA staff.
- **Improved Provider Payments:** The TPAs will pay claims submitted by community providers within the network they administer and the TPAs will send invoices directly to VA for reimbursement.

The timeline for VA to transition to the new CCN is based on when contracts are awarded to the TPAs to administer the work. In all four CCN

Regions, the TPAs will initiate care at two sites in each region within 180 days and at all sites within each region in 12 months from the date of contract award.

Send any general questions about CCN to <https://iris.custhelp.com/app/ask>.



Veterans' Day Celebration Breakfast



**Sunday, November 11th
7:00 AM - 11:00 AM**

Aberdeen Elks Lodge 1046 - 705 Circle Drive, Aberdeen

**The Breakfast Buffet is
FREE for ALL Veterans.**

Free will donations are requested for the guests of veterans and public.
The proceeds will be donated to the Marine Corps 'Toys For Tots' Program.

**Thank you to all who have
served or are currently serving.**



UPCOMING EVENTS

Nov 11-12—Sea of Goodwill Equine Retreat—Joy Ranch—Watertown
 Nov 11—Veterans Day
 Nov 12—State Offices Closed
 Nov 16—VABHHCS VSO Congressional Forum—Domiciliary Auditorium—Hot Springs —10:00 am (MT)
 Nov 16—Dakota Dunes CBOC Open House—2:00 pm (CT)
 Nov 22-23—State Offices Closed
 Dec 4—Governor's Budget Address—State Capitol—1:00 pm (CT)
 Dec 10—Wreaths Across America Ceremony—Flaming Fountain Veterans Memorial—Pierre—11:00 am (CT)
 Dec 24-25—State Offices Closed
 Dec 31—Jan 1—State Offices Closed
 Jan 8—Governor's State of the State—State Capitol—1:00 pm (CT)
 Jan 13-18—VFW Accredited Service Officer Training—Annapolis, MD
 Jan 18—Sioux Falls Military Appreciation Resource Fair—Central Church (Ralph Rogers Road) 10:00 am—9:00 pm (CT)
 Jan 28-29—VFW State Legislative Conference—Pierre
 Jan 28—VFW State Legislative Reception—Pierre
 Feb 2—USS South Dakota Commissioning
 Feb 8-10—American Legion Mid Winter Conference—Holiday Inn—Spearfish
 Mar 3-7—VFW Legislative Conference—Washington, DC
 July 20-24—National VFW Convention—Orlando, FL



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South Dakota Department of the Military <http://military.sd.gov>

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